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Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

Advancement of women

Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Security Council
Fifty-fifth year

Letter dated 12 July 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations, which were adopted at the seminar organized by the Lessons Learned Unit of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, and hosted by the Namibian Government from 29 to 31 May 2000 in Windhoek (see annexes).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annexes distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under items 87, 109 and 155 of the provisional agenda, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Martin **Andjaba**
Ambassador and Permanent Representative

* A/55/150.

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Annex I to the letter dated 12 July 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Windhoek Declaration on the tenth anniversary of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group

Windhoek, 31 May 2000

In a world riven by war, women and men yearn for peace and are everywhere striving to resolve conflict and bring about peace, reconciliation and stability in their communities, their countries and through the United Nations and regional organizations.

United Nations peace operations have evolved from peacekeeping, in its traditional sense, towards multidimensional peace support operations. So far, women have been denied their full role in these efforts, both nationally and internationally, nor has the gender dimension in peace processes been adequately addressed.

In order to ensure the effectiveness of peace support operations, the principles of gender equity and equality must permeate the entire mission, at all levels, thus ensuring the participation of women and men as equal partners and beneficiaries in all aspects of the peace process, from peacekeeping, reconciliation and peace-building, towards a situation of political stability in which women and men play an equal part in the political, economic and social development of their country.

Having considered these matters in Windhoek at a seminar on mainstreaming a gender perspective in multidimensional peace support operations organized by the Lessons Learned Unit of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the United Nations Secretariat and hosted by the Government of Namibia from 29 to 31 May 2000, the seminar looked at practical ways in which the United Nations system and Members States can bring the aims set out above closer to realization. In that regard, the seminar recommends the Namibia Plan of Action and urges the Secretary-General to ensure that appropriate follow-up measures are taken to implement it, in consultation with Member States, and that periodic progress reviews are undertaken.

Annex II to the letter dated 12 June 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations

1. **Negotiations in Furtherance of a Ceasefire and/or Peace Agreements:**
   - Equal access and participation by women and men should be ensured in the area of conflict at all levels and stages of the peace process.
   - In negotiations for a ceasefire and/or peace agreements, women should be an integral part of the negotiating team and process. The negotiating team and/or facilitators should ensure that gender issues are placed on the agenda and that those issues are addressed fully in the agreement.

2. **Mandate**
   - The initial assessment mission for any peace support operation should include a senior adviser on gender mainstreaming.
   - The Secretary-General's initial report to the Security Council, based on the assessment mission, should include the issue of gender mainstreaming, and should propose adequate budgetary provisions.
   - Security Council resolutions setting up and extending peace support operations should incorporate a specific mandate on gender mainstreaming.
   - All mandates for peace support operations should refer to the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), as well as other relevant international legal instruments.
   - Follow-on mechanisms should be established within the mission's mandate to carry over tasks to implement fully gender mainstreaming in the post-conflict reconstruction period.

3. **Leadership**
   - In accordance with the Secretary-General's target of 50 per cent women in managerial and decision-making positions, more determined efforts must be made to select and appoint female Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and senior field staff for peace support operations.
   - A comprehensive database with information specifically on female candidates with qualifications, both military and civilian, should be maintained.
   - In DPKO an Advisory Board should be set up, preferably with qualified external participation, to ensure that this database and existing lists of female candidates are given due consideration.
   - Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and senior mission personnel should receive an in-depth briefing on gender mainstreaming issues prior to deployment.

4. **Planning, Structure and Resources of Missions**
   - A gender affairs unit is crucial for effective gender mainstreaming and should be a standard component of all missions. It should be adequately funded and staffed at appropriate levels and should have direct access to senior decision-makers.

- The DPKO-led operational planning teams at UN Headquarters must include gender specialists and representatives of other UN agencies and organizations dealing with gender issues.
- All DPKO and DPA briefings to the Security Council, as well as formal and informal briefings to the General Assembly legislative bodies, Member States and other relevant bodies, should integrate gender issues related to that particular mission.
- There is a need for the financial authorities of the United Nations, particularly the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), to give priority to the funding of gender mainstreaming.
- Lessons learned from current and prior missions on gender should be incorporated at the planning stage of a new mission. To this end, the compilation of best practices on gender mainstreaming should be constantly updated.

5. Recruitment

- The United Nations must set an example by rapidly increasing the number of senior female civilian personnel in peace support operations in all relevant Headquarters departments, including DPKO, and in the field.
- Member States should be asked to increase the number of women in their military and civilian police forces who are qualified to serve in peace support operations at all levels, including the most senior. To this end, a stronger mechanism than the current *note verbale* to troop-contributing Nations should be developed. Requests to troop-contributing nations could be tailor-made to nations who are known to have suitable female staff, while other potential troop-contributing nations could be encouraged to develop longer-term strategies to increase the number and rank of female personnel in their respective forces.
- The terms of reference, including eligibility requirements, for all heads of mission components and their personnel should be reviewed and modified to facilitate the increased participation of women, and, depending on the outcome of that review, special measures should be taken to secure this goal.
- All agreements and individual contracts governing the assignment of personnel, including arrangements for United Nations Volunteers, should reflect the gender-related obligations and responsibilities of those personnel. In particular, the code of conduct should be addressed in all of these documents.

6. Training

- Troop-contributing nations, which are training military, police and civilian personnel specifically for their participation in peace support operations, should involve a higher percentage of women in that training.
- Gender issues should be mainstreamed throughout all regional and national training curricula and courses for peace support operations and particularly those sponsored directly by DPKO's Training Unit.
- In order to meet United Nations standards for behaviour, DPKO should provide gender awareness guidelines and materials so that Member States can incorporate these elements into their national training programmes for military and civilian police personnel in preparation for deployment. Such training should be enhanced by United Nations Training Assistance Teams and 'train-the-trainers' programmes.

- Obligatory induction training with regard to gender issues held upon arrival at mission areas should include the following:
  - code of conduct
  - culture, history and social norms of the host country
  - CEDAW
  - sexual harassment and sexual assault

7. Procedures

- DPKO should consider the gender mainstreaming mechanisms currently used by United Nations agencies and adapt an appropriate version for their field operations. DPKO directives should be amended to include gender mainstreaming.
- The reporting mechanisms between the field and Headquarters on gender mainstreaming need to be clarified.
- A post for a Senior Gender Adviser in DPKO, to serve as gender focal point for field missions, should be funded under the regular budget or the peacekeeping support account and filled as a matter of urgency.
- The terms of reference of the Senior Gender Adviser should ensure a proper interchange of information and experience between gender units in individual missions.
- The functions and roles of missions' gender units/advisers should be announced to all personnel.
- Standard Operating Procedures applying to all components of missions should to be developed on the issues of sexual assault and sexual harassment.

8. Monitoring, Evaluation and Accountability

- Accountability for all issues relating to gender mainstreaming at the field level should be at the highest level, vested in the Secretary-General's Special Representative, who should be assigned the responsibility of ensuring that gender mainstreaming is implemented in all areas and components of the mission.
- The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and other concerned legislative bodies should submit recommendations to the General Assembly promoting gender mainstreaming in peace operations.
- Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the implementation of the United Nations gender mainstreaming objectives should be established at United Nations Headquarters and at peacekeeping missions, in consultation with the Division for the Advancement of Women.
- The current format of reporting, particularly with regard to situation reports and periodic reports of the Secretary-General, should include progress on gender mainstreaming throughout peacekeeping missions.
- There should be periodic and end-of-mission evaluations, led by an independent external team, of the degree to which the United Nations gender mainstreaming approach and objectives have been integrated into all policies and activities of each peace support operation. The first studies should be on East Timor and Kosovo.
- Reporting mechanisms should be established to monitor the effects of the implementation of the peace agreement on the host country population from a gender perspective.

- Research should be encouraged on the short- and long-term effects of the gender dimension of peace support operations on the host country population. Such research should be designed to strengthen host country research capacity, in particular that of women researchers.

9. Public Awareness

- All possible means should be employed to increase public awareness of the importance of gender mainstreaming in peace support operations. In this connection, the media should play a significant and positive role.